

SENATE BILL 2461
By Beavers

AN ACT to name the segment of State Route 292 in Clay County in honor of the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker.

WHEREAS, from time to time, the members of this General Assembly have seen fit to name certain highways and bridges to honor the memory of those courageous members of the United States Armed Forces who gave their lives in the defense of our nation; and

WHEREAS, no person is more deserving of this honor than the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard, who was killed in the line of duty on October 13, 2005, while serving in Iraq; and

WHEREAS, following the patriotic tradition for which Clay County and the Volunteer State are renowned, Wesley Tucker served with distinction as a Sergeant in the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment for two years; and

WHEREAS, also known as the Third Tennessee/Three River Regiment, the 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment is headquartered in Knoxville, with units throughout East and Middle Tennessee; this regiment of over 3000 soldiers was mobilized in June of 2004 in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom; and

WHEREAS, like thousands of others of this nation's sons and daughters, Wesley Tucker did not shrink from serving in combat, believing in the justice of the cause to protect our national security and liberty and to free the Iraqi people; and

WHEREAS, Sergeant Wesley Tucker served with great courage and gallantry, giving his life for his country and for the cause in which he believed, and for that ultimate sacrifice, he deserves proper recognition; as a member of the Tennessee Army National Guard, he proudly continued an essential tradition of American society: the concept of the citizen-soldier; and

WHEREAS, Wesley Tucker's dedication to excellence in the military and his love of his family, his fellow soldiers and his country, exemplified in his sacrifice of life itself in defense of all that he held dear, stand as enduring examples of all the characteristics that have ensured the continued freedom of our nation and the preservation of its ideals over the course of our history; and

WHEREAS, in civilian life, Wesley Tucker was a dedicated employee of the Clay County Highway Department, and he worked with purpose and conviction to build and maintain the best roads possible for the citizens of Clay County; and

WHEREAS, the Clay County Commission has petitioned this body to name a segment of State Route 292 in their county to permanently commemorate the singular patriotism, courage, and commitment to duty of the late Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard; and

WHEREAS, this General Assembly most heartily concurs with this excellent proposal; now, therefore,

BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE:

SECTION 1. Notwithstanding any provision of law to the contrary, the segment of State Route 292 in Clay County is hereby designated as the "Sgt. Robert Wesley Tucker Memorial Highway" in recognition of the life of valor and death in combat of Sergeant Robert Wesley Tucker, 3rd Squadron, 278th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Tennessee Army National Guard.

SECTION 2. The Department of Transportation is directed to erect suitable signs or to affix suitable markers designating the segment of State Route 292 in Clay County as the "Sgt. Robert Wesley Tucker Memorial Highway". The cost of such signage shall be funded in accordance with Tennessee Code Annotated, §54-1-133.

SECTION 3. The erection of such signs shall be within the guidelines prescribed by the *Manual on Uniform Traffic Control Devices*.

SECTION 4. This act shall become operative only if the federal highway administrator advises the Commissioner of Transportation in writing that the provisions of this act shall not render Tennessee in violation of federal laws and regulations and subject to penalties prescribed therein.

SECTION 5. This act shall take effect upon becoming a law, the public welfare requiring it.